

ENDING THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, after more than a decade of war, the loss of 2,178 American heroes, thousands seriously injured, and the expenditure of nearly \$2 trillion, we must end our military presence in Afghanistan now, safely bring our troops home, and begin to focus on the urgent challenges we face here in America.

A sustainable, long-term peace can only be accomplished when the people of Afghanistan assume responsibility for their own security.

Yesterday, our colleague JIM MCGOVERN offered an amendment that directed the President to rapidly accelerate the transition of U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan to the Afghan government by December, and would have required congressional approval if the President sought to keep U.S. military forces in Afghanistan after that. Unfortunately, we were denied the right to have a debate and vote on this amendment.

We owe the brave men and women in uniform a clear plan to bring them home safely and soon and to end this war now.

After more than 12 years of war and the killing of Osama bin Laden, it is time to end the war in Afghanistan and instead focus our attention on creating jobs, rebuilding our infrastructure, providing care for our veterans, and focusing on the serious fiscal challenges facing our Nation.

HONORING DOUGLAS H. CAREY

(Mr. JOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my deepest condolences—and those of Florida's 13th Congressional District—to the family, friends, and fellow police officers of Mr. Douglas H. Carey, who tragically lost his life earlier this week.

Officer Carey began his service with the Clearwater Police Department as a patrolman on December 9, 1968. For nearly two decades, he assisted the people of Clearwater as a patrolman, a field training officer, and eventually as a detective. But his retirement from police work in 1987 was hardly the end of service.

Following his retirement, Officer Carey served on the security staff of Morton Plant Hospital. In 2010, he rejoined his brothers and sisters within the police department as a school crossing guard.

Officer Carey lost his life while doing what he loved and what he did best: protecting and serving his community. He was 70 years old.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to honor the life and service today of Officer Carey, who

is survived by his loving wife of 42 years, Jean; his son, Brian; his daughter, Toni; and his young grandson, Dylan.

Officer Carey will be greatly missed, but his spirit lives on through the many, many lives he has touched in our community of Pinellas County, Florida.

TOURETTE SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the opportunity to meet with a bright young boy who was diagnosed with Tourette syndrome and is working to bring attention to this disorder. His passion is an inspiration, and I want to share his own words about the importance of raising awareness.

Dear Congressman Luján. My name is Alexander Dennis. I live in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, and am 14 years old.

I grew up with a neurological disorder called Tourette syndrome. It causes me and about 200,000 others in the United States to make sudden movements and uncontrollable sounds. This disorder affects me daily and is a lifelong condition. There is no cure for Tourette syndrome.

I have to live daily with painful neck and full-body jerks. Others with this disorder have different severity levels and different types of movement. It is noticeable to others, but I do not know I am doing the movements sometimes.

There are not many doctors that are experienced with Tourette syndrome, and it took me 4 years to be properly diagnosed.

May 15 through June 15 is Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month, and I am writing to you because I am working to raise awareness to the challenges people face that have this syndrome. Any help that you can give will be greatly appreciated to me and all that suffer from this disorder.

Thank you, Alexander, for your voice and your efforts. I look forward to working with you on this issue.

BUDGET IMPACTS ON OUR MILITARY

(Mr. NUNNELEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, the most important function of our government is to provide for the common defense. That is why I am pleased that the National Defense Authorization Act blocks the administration's end strength reduction proposal, as well as redistribution of important National Guard aviation assets. But I do have some specific concerns.

Of specific concern of this misguided and shortsighted proposal is the impact on the Mississippi National Guard's 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team. This unit has a proven history of defending freedom abroad. But recently, when our State was hit by devastating tornados, these were the first respond-

ers. They provided vital security and search and rescue. I commend these men and women that make up the 155th and express my concern for the support of their mission.

Congress cannot balance our budget on the backs of the men and women voluntarily serving our country, nor expect their families, who already give so much, to make further sacrifices.

To find areas within our Federal Government to responsibly cut, we must look at all forms of Federal spending, not just the discretionary spending alone.

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, our veterans risked their lives in service of our Nation. When they come home, they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, especially by those they count on to provide them with essential medical care.

The disturbing reports about the unethical treatment of our military men and women by the VA is not only an affront to those that we count on to protect our freedoms and our liberties, it highlights a systemic lack of accountability, starting at the top and permeating throughout the agency.

Mr. Speaker, no veteran should pass away waiting for the care they need or the benefits that they deserve. The ineptitude of the VA is an affront to the sacrifice of the veterans who are turning to this agency for assistance and the taxpayers whose hard-earned dollars should be funding this worthy cause.

While this week the House took action to empower the VA to rid itself of those who fail to meet their responsibilities with the passage of the Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act, there is still much work to be done.

I firmly believe that sunlight is the best disinfectant, and I will continue to work to shine a bright light on the situation until we can assure that the VA provides the service and respect that our veterans deserve.

HISTORIC PRAYER SERVICE

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the inspiring prayer service between Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew this Sunday at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

These two spiritual leaders of 1.5 billion Christians worldwide are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first historic meeting in Jerusalem between their predecessors: Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras in 1964.